



South Mountain Corridor Study

Citizens Advisory Team

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Date: August 25, 2005
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: Huhugam Heritage Center, 4759 N. Maricopa Road, Chandler

CAT Members Attending:

Rock Argabright, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce
 Laurel Arndt, Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee
 Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA
 Steve Boschen, Valley Forward
 Clayton Danzeisen (for Steve Williams), Maricopa County Farm Bureau
 Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
 Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council

Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce
 David Lafferty, Tolleson
 Nathaniel Percharo, I-10 Pecos Landowners
 Laura Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
 Michelle Pulich-Stewart, Sierra Club
 Jim Strogon, Kyrene Lagos Elementary School
 Anthony Villareal, Gila River Indian Community, District 6

Staff and Consultants:

Eric Anderson, MAG
 Michael Bruder, ADOT
 Matt Burdick, ADOT
 Kelly Cairo, GCI
 Amy Edwards, HDR
 Chris Clary-Lemon, HDR
 Ralph Ellis, ADOT

Theresa Gunn, GCI
 John Roberts, GRIC
 Mark Schlappi, MAG
 Ben Spargo, HDR
 Steve Thomas, FHWA
 Bill Vachon, FHWA
 Shannon Wilhelmsen, ADOT

Citizens:

Danny Clouse
 William Eastburn
 David Folts
 Bill Foster
 Sandra Foster
 Urban Giff
 Jim Joachim
 Ross Klaeber
 Justin Leishman

Barnaby V. Lewis
 Matthew Alan Lord
 Eric Lutfy
 Nancy Mahaney
 Alan Mann
 Matthew Mellor
 Lisa Percharo
 John Pratt
 Corrine Purtill
 Bill Quinton

William Ramsay
 Bob Roessel
 Roger Roy
 Robin Salthouse
 Brian Schumacher
 David Swisher
 Steve Thune
 Steve Wilcox

ACTION PLAN:

| Task/Activity | Who | When |
|--|-------------------|------------------|
| Address traffic modeling requests for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.m. and p.m. travel times Additional clarification on the 4-14% difference. Convert percentages to actual trips. | Chris Clary-Lemon | Next CAT meeting |

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| Send MAG 2004 LOS to Laurel Arndt. | Mark Schlappi | ASAP |
| MAG to determine assumptions used in traffic modeling regarding GRIC, Maricopa. | Mark Schlappi | Next CAT meeting |
| Address the effect of a South Mountain Freeway on relieving traffic on other routes. Provide I-10/Chandler volumes. | Chris Clary-Lemon | Next CAT meeting |

Welcome and Introductions:

Theresa Gunn welcomed attendees to the meeting and explained that comments from public attendees would be accepted in writing, and if possible, responses would be provided. This would occur prior to the tour of the center, at which time the meeting would be concluded. She asked CAT members to introduce themselves and indicate any comments or concerns they may have at this time.

CAT Member Comments:

Comment: I am concerned about losing any amount of parkland, and about health effects.

Comment: There are differing views from various council areas.

Comment: We need to discuss areas further south of Pecos, and get a handle in general on what is proposed.

Project Update:

Amy Edwards provided a schedule update. ADOT plans to select a west side preferred alternative by the end of 2005, with public meetings in early December and a Citizens Advisory Team selection of a preferred alternative in mid-December. ADOT and FHWA will consider the CAT selection as part of their overall consideration in determining a preferred alternative.

This schedule may require additional CAT meetings, which could be held on Saturdays, or adding the second Thursday of each month to the CAT calendar. In the past, CAT members indicated that they were not interested in Saturday meetings. On August 26, Edwards and Gunn will meet to discuss alternatives to offer to CAT members. Edwards asked the group to inform her of which reports they wish to see sooner in the process.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: There would only be three meetings left to make this selection.

Question: Why is this decision needed by the end of the year? **Response:** ADOT and the cities and their constituents need to determine a plan for the South Mountain Freeway.

Comment: I am concerned about the time left to get all of this information out. The CoNexus voting is a whole meeting.

Comment: We need a full four meetings to discuss information.

Comment: Especially with the holidays, I don't think this is realistic timeline for making a good decision.

Edwards also updated the group on the potential shifts for the 71st Avenue and 55th Avenue alternatives. Both areas are affected by Section 4(f) concerns. In the Santa Maria area, the school ball field is Section 4(f). Hudson Farm is eligible to be listed as historical, in which case the site would fall under the Section 4(f) process. Section 4(f) and potential 4(f) locations cannot be part of any option for an alternative if there are prudent and feasible alternatives. However, property owners may use the land as they wish, including selling it. Edwards noted that certain alignments suggested for the 71st Avenue alternative could not be forwarded for consideration due to safety concerns. Peggy Eastburn outlined zoning plans in progress for the Dobbins and 55th Avenue area.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: New development doesn't show up on aerial photography.

Comment: A hazard of planning is that homeowners are displaced.

Comment: It is frustrating that the new home reports don't show the possibility of a freeway in these areas.

Comment: I would urge people to conduct a site visit to know what is going on in the area.

Question: Can the building on Hudson Farm be moved? **Response:** Technically, it may be possible. However, the building would no longer be in a historic setting.

Comment: We should be seeing overlays of communities. **Response:** A land use report is forthcoming.

Question: Are different amounts of right-of-way needed for at-grade or raised?

Response: Raised generally requires more space, but this varies.

Question: Are all of the alignments at grade? **Response:** They are all at-grade or elevated.

Traffic Modeling:

Chris Clary-Lemon reviewed traffic information. Trip distribution information shows that 12% of the 160,000 vehicles (2030 traffic projection) that pass through the South Mountain area originate or go to the Ahwatukee Foothills area.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Can we see a.m. and p.m. travel times? **Response:** Yes, we can provide this.

Comment: I would like more clarification on the 4-14% difference.

Comment: I would like to see these charts converted to actual trips.

Question: How many of these trips come from the south? **Response:** Information such as this will be included in the traffic technical report.

Clary-Lemon introduced Eric Anderson and Mark Schlappi with MAG. Schlappi reviewed the scope and types of studies that are used in compiling traffic modeling information. He noted that models are compared to actuals to verify accuracy.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Do you add an “x” factor for under-reporting, such as those who are undocumented employees or work for cash? **Response:** I’m not sure, but I do know the census works to document the homeless.

Question: How do you know the purpose of the trip? **Response:** There are many studies that contribute to this information. In 2001, we contacted 4,000 households by phone and asked people to fill out trip logs. There is a separate part of the model for trucks. We also query work-related, non-home trips.

Question: How does minimum trip assignment accommodate an actual route or one with stops along the way? **Response:** We recognize this possible inconsistency and give people GPS units to determine actual routes. We have found that on average, the model still provides good volumes. For example, with increased congestion, the model assumes movement onto other nearby streets.

Question: Is a 36% daily RMSE a good average? **Response:** This is a good average. Even traffic counts are not perfect, with variation of about 20 percent each day. Lower volume roads tend to have more variation.

Question: Can I get the 2004 Level of Service (LOS) slide? **Response:** Most slides from this presentation are available on the MAG website. This one isn’t, but I will send it to you.

Question: Are LOS maps shown with all planned improvements? **Response:** Yes.

Question: How much traffic is internal versus external? **Response:** I don’t know specifically, but the slides do show various items included in the model.

Question: Modeling ends at the Gila River Indian Community. What are the specific numbers from this area? This has to increase, especially with all of the stores, Rawhide, and other planned development for the area. **Response:** These forecasts were adopted in 2003 and are being updated now.

Comment: I have been requesting this information for months and find the lack of information is very frustrating. **Response:** Plans for Rawhide were subsequent to the 2003 information, and this piece would not have been figured into the model. We cannot

predict what will occur on the Community and must rely on information provided to us. We will need to check the database to see which assumptions were included.

Question: Are the plans for Maricopa and other areas of new growth in nearby areas reflected in the model? **Response:** I don't know. The models show land use plans, and data as available from GRIC. MAG will provide a list of assumptions.

Comment: It is nice to see the models, but we need to see the results now, and especially over the next three months. **Response:** HDR presented maps and data at meetings held in the last two months. This presentation is meant to show modeling methods.

Comment: It is hard to relate the maps and traffic flow information. I want to know: If we put this freeway in, how does it help relieve traffic on other routes? **Response:** MAG is working now with HDR on a combined analysis showing arterial streets and freeways.

Comment: It is hard to remember that these figures for traffic include planned changes, especially when we don't know these changes will necessarily occur. **Response:** We have to take plans into account because this is considered an integrated plan.

Question: Is MAG data destination-driven or are we seeing drive-through traffic? **Response:** The numbers on the map show combined volume of east and west traffic.

Comment: I want to see I-10/Chandler volumes, as this will be critical. **Response:** We will provide that information.

Question: It looks like there is a disparity in increases. Are the improvements planned for the Broadway curve part of the model? **Response:** Yes.

Question: What about the price of gas as a factor in the model? **Response:** This is not part of the model, but poses a very good question.

Question: Are demographics and population trends both part of the model? **Response:** Yes, household size is a factor, as well as a wide variety of household demographics.

Question: Does the age of the household members get factored in? **Response:** The aging of the household is factored. DES information is used, as well as number of vehicles in the household, age of the household members, size, and income.

Question: What about 2025 data versus the new 2030 data that show fewer trips? **Response:** Trip generations per household were shown to change. There were also economic downturns in 2001. We may see more data changes, and are always working to enhance the data. A MAG representative will attend all future CAT meetings to address these types of questions.

Comment: I want to point out that not everyone in Laveen wants a 55th Avenue alignment. We have sent 20 rebuttals to *The Arizona Republic* article that took this position. None have been printed.

Respond to Written Comments/Questions:

Gunn announced that due to time constraints, only questions that have not been asked at previous meetings would be addressed. However, all questions would be recorded in the meeting notes. Public comments and questions addressed include:

Alan Mann

Comment: My wife and I moved our family to Laveen in 1981, and have enjoyed raising our children in a rural setting. We know the changes are coming to our area. Laveen has spent a lot of time and energy trying to plan for this. We would like to encourage you to choose the realignment for W55 to the west of the current proposal. To move to the east would destroy Laveen's planning for a community. I would also support W71.

David Folts, Concerned Families Along South Mountain Loop 202

Question: What percentage of the 160,000 vehicles that are passing through South Mountain Park are trucks and what percentage are vehicles that are just passing through Phoenix? Please enter these questions in the EIS. **Response:** About 10 percent trucks; pass-through will be determined.

Matthew Mellor, Citizen of Laveen

Question: Noting the congestion on US60 in Mesa and Tempe, why is the South Mountain freeway following the same pattern of intersections at every mile? (Elliott, Dobbins, Baseline, etc.) **Response:** This is not yet determined and remains under ongoing coordination.

Question: Due to the rapid development of west side/Laveen communities, available parcels (with limited residential impact) are quickly being consumed, would a push out date (for a recommendation) by this body make a recommendation more difficult and more out of date? **Response:** We try to provide the best information available.

W. William Foster:

Question: Were developers along 55th Avenue notified of this 55th Avenue alignment? Why is new residential development allowed near these corridors when this has been planned for so long? **Response:** Developers were notified. ADOT can't prohibit property purchases. Development is at the discretion of the cities. Once ADOT owns right-of-way, signs can be posted. Those that show "future home of South Mountain Freeway" are related to purchases from the original environmental assessment in 1988. ADOT has not purchase land for this project since this new process began.

David Folts, Concerned Families Along South Mountain Loop 202

Comment: I would think it a good idea to allow a 10-minute discussion period before each Co Nexus vote so all the SMCAT members are up to speed on definitions and intent. **Response:** This is a good idea.

Question: Since South Mountain Loop 202 bypasses the center of the city and resides on the southern border, will South Mountain Loop 202 be the new Hazardous Cargo Route? If this is selected as a Hazardous Cargo Route will radioactive materials be allowed?

Please describe some of the present hazardous cargo being transported on Hazardous Cargo Routes. Please enter this question in the EIS. **Response:** This was addressed as a previous CAT meeting and can be found in past meeting notes.

Question: Concerning particulate pollutions, are ultra fine particle (<0.1 to 2.5) microns predominantly derived from combustions of fossil fuels? Are these ultra fine particles a major component in vehicle emissions? **Question:** Do ultra fine particles (<0.1 to 2.5 microns) from vehicle emissions have a high content of potentially toxic hydrocarbons among all PM sources? Do ultra fine particles (<.01 to 2.5 microns) penetrate deeper into lung tissues than fine particles and if they do, can the particles trigger inflammation in the smaller airways leading to exacerbation of asthma and bronchitis? **Question:** If one had to relate living along this highway within 250 feet and being exposed to the highway traffic pollution, this would equate about to smoking how many cigarettes a day if any? Please enter this question in the EIS. **Response:** There will be a detailed air quality analysis coming.

Question: Can you name the interchanges on the west and south side of South Mountain Loop 202 that will be raised interchanges? How many feet above grade will the tallest one be? **Response:** Currently, all interchanges are planned with the freeway going over the arterial street. The freeway would be approximately 25 feet above the arterial street.

GRIC Cultural Resources and Tour of the Huhugam Heritage Center

Barnaby Lewis, GRIC Cultural Resources Specialist, noted the significance of addressing native communities in that he has provided Section 106 consultations that might affect projects. He explained the significance of South Mountain in the story of creation, which is a legend told only in winter. The mountain is also the home of many ancient places, mountain shrines, and petroglyphs in places of reverence. The times of ritual ceremonies are not advertised, yet these occur on an ongoing basis.

The meeting concluded with a tour of the center, after which time the meeting was to be considered adjourned.

Next Meeting:

Thursday, September 22, 2005 at 5:30 p.m. in the GRIC District 6 Komatke Center, Learning Center Meeting Hall